

Remarks

By the foregoing Amendment, claims 6, 8, 10 and 15 are amended. No new matter is added by this Amendment. Entry of the Amendment, and favorable consideration thereof, is earnestly requested.

Pursuant to the Examiner's instruction, Paragraph 0001 of the specification has been amended to reflect the updated status of the parent application.

Pursuant to the Examiner's instruction, Figure 7 has been revised to correct a clerical error.

The Examiner has indicated that claims 6 and 10 contain various informalities. Accordingly, claims 6 and 10 have been amended.

The Examiner has indicated that claim 10, if rewritten in independent form, would be allowable. Accordingly, this claim 10 has been amended to include all of the limitations of independent claim 9.

The Examiner had indicated that claims 8 and 15-17 are indefinite under 35 U.S.C. § 112 because claims 8, 15 and 17 lack antecedent basis. Accordingly, claim 8 has been amended, and claim 15 has been amended to correct the dependency of claims 15-17.

The Examiner has rejected claim 9 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by O'Neil, U.S. Patent No. 5,944,877. The Examiner has also rejected claim 9, as well as claims 11-17, under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as anticipated by Mustacich, U.S. Patent No. 6,223,584. However, since claims 15-17 have now been amended to be dependent upon claim 10, and since claim 10 has been indicated to be allowable, claims 15-17 are also allowable. With respect to claims 9 and 11-14, these rejections are respectfully traversed.

O'Neil (Claim 9) and Mustacich (Claims 9 and 11-14)

Neither the O'Neil reference nor the Mustacich reference anticipates independent claim 9 because all of the elements in claim 9 are not shown in either of those references. Specifically, O'Neil and Mustacich, at the very least, do not disclose a headspace sampler or a transfer line for connecting to a headspace sampler.

Moreover, independent claim 9 is not obvious over either O'Neil or Mustacich, as there is no suggestion or motivation for one skilled in the art to add these features to either of these references. Indeed, both references even teach away from doing so. With respect to O'Neil, when discussing the disadvantages of having to rely on a programmable injector, the reference specifically notes that "[t]ypically, samples are introduced into a gas chromatograph by simply pressing a hypodermic needle." (Col.2, lines 9-11). With respect to Mustacich, the very design of the device would not facilitate connection to a headspace sampler, as the device is related to a "sampling system in which an in-line 'trap', i.e. sorbent tube, containing adsorbent material, mechanically opens directly to a surrounding gaseous or liquid media for sample introduction and then seals to a unit containing a gas chromatographic column..." (Col.1, lines 20-25). Accordingly, O'Neil and Mustacich clearly do not suggest using a headspace sampler in conjunction with a device for pre-concentrating analytes and introducing the sample mixture from the headspace sampler into a chromatographic column.

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Response to Official Action

It is respectfully submitted that claims 1-17, all of the claims remaining in the application, are in order for allowance, and early notice to that effect is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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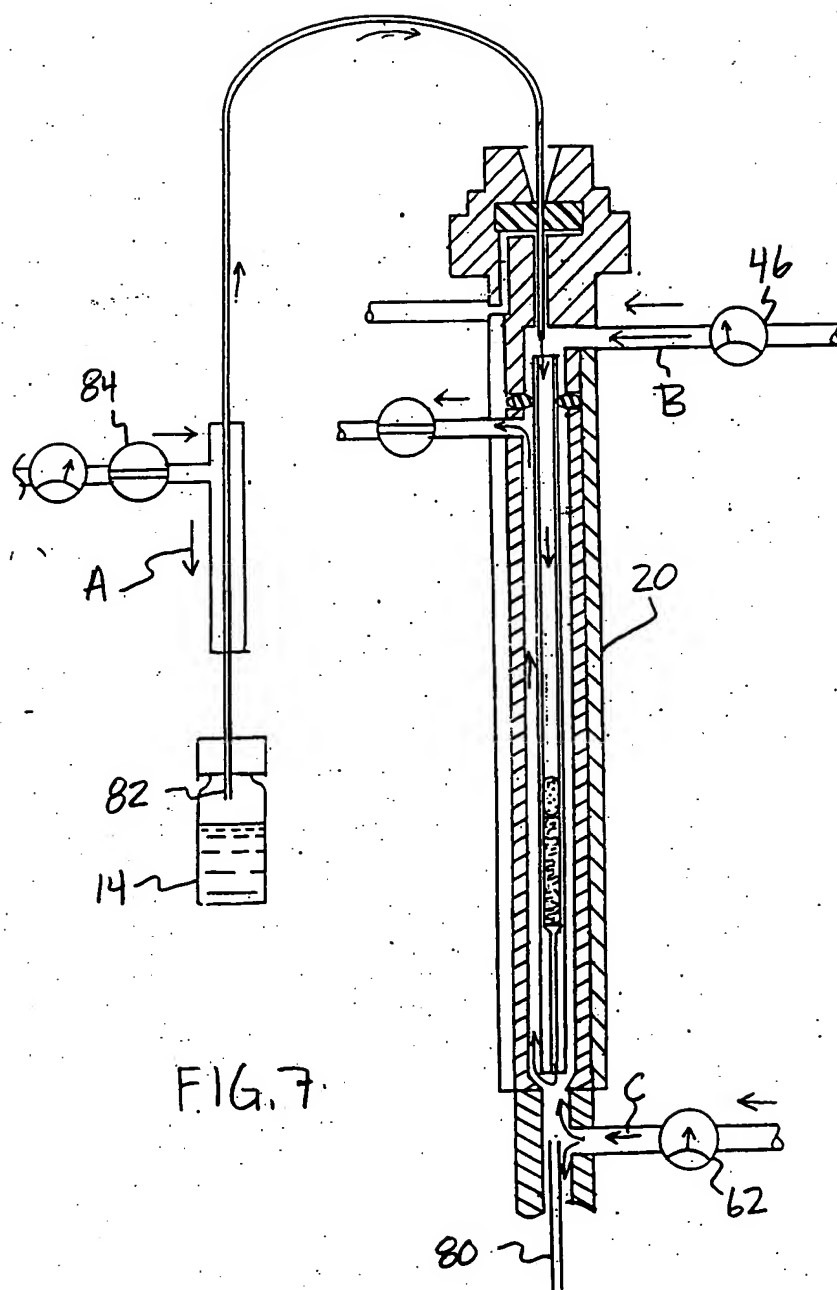


FIG. 7